



STATE OF INDIANA
INDIANA STATE EXCISE POLICE

302 W. Washington Street
IGCS, Room E-114
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Corporal Travis Thickstun
Public Information Officer
Telephone 317-232-2469
tthickstun@atc.in.gov
www.in.gov/iseip

For Immediate Release

Excise Officers Cite 8 Stores, Arrest Man for Unlawful Cigarette Sales

PORTAGE, Ind. (Aug. 29) – Indiana State Excise Police officers cited eight stores and arrested a Portage man after a three-month investigation into the unlawful sale of cigarettes in two northwest Indiana counties.

Excise officers initially began their investigation at Smokers III, 5995 U.S. 20, in Portage, in early June after they found evidence indicating the store's owner had been unlawfully distributing cigarettes to several businesses in Lake and Porter counties.

As a result of the investigation, excise officers arrested store owner Fahad Siddiqui, 28, of Portage, at his residence on a Porter County warrant for illegal distribution of cigarettes, a class B misdemeanor.

Records indicate Siddiqui unlawfully distributed more than \$300,000 in cigarettes to businesses since 2010. Officers also located evidence indicating Siddiqui continued the practice after being advised not to in early June.

Seven other tobacco businesses were cited administratively on preliminary charges of unlawfully purchasing tobacco from an unauthorized source. *(See attached list of businesses.)*

Officers are continuing their investigation and additional charges are possible.

As the enforcement division of the Indiana Alcohol and Tobacco Commission, the primary mission of the Indiana State Excise Police is to promote public safety by enforcing Indiana's Alcoholic Beverage Code. While excise officers have the authority to enforce any state law, they focus primarily on alcohol, tobacco and related laws.

All criminal defendants are to be presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

All respondents are to be presumed not liable until, and unless the plaintiff can prove by preponderance of the evidence the respondent's liability in an administrative hearing.

Fahad Siddiqui Tobacco Investigation

The following businesses were cited on preliminary charges of unlawfully purchasing tobacco from an unauthorized source:

Main Street Station
235 Main St
Hobart, Ind. 46342

The Endzone
314 Main St
Hobart, Ind. 46342

Mickey D's
518 E 3rd St
Hobart, Ind. 46342

Flamingo Pizza
8341 Locust Ave
Gary, Ind. 46403

Murphy's
5245 East Dunes Hwy
Gary, Ind. 46403

Smoke Shop
392 W US Hwy 6
Valparaiso, Ind. 46385

Smoke Shop
6346 Central Ave
Portage, Ind. 46368